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President Shelly Approves \$8.6 Million for Water Projects and Studies

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.- Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly approved an \$8.6 million measure that plans to bring water development projects and plans to several Navajo Nation communities.

The funding would come from the Navajo Nation's Undesignated Unreserved Fund Balance.

"Water infrastructure is very important to my administration. Though I am concerned about maintaining money in our Undesignated Unreserved Fund Balance, these projects will bring water to our Navajo people and plan for future water projects. Navajo communities need water to be healthy physically and economically," President Shelly said.

The legislation, passed by the Navajo Nation Council last week, outlines projects and plans for communities throughout the Navajo Nation.

Projects funded by the \$8.6 million appropriation include:

1. Design and construction of a new Rough Rock water well.
2. Construction of a waterline east of Dennehotso, Ariz. that will serve 62 homes.
3. A fund, placed under the Navajo Nation Water Management Branch, that will be utilized to develop preliminary engineering reports and environmental reports that will assist in leveraging funds from available federal programs such as USDA-Rural Development.
4. Leupp-Dilkon and Kayenta regional water supply development projects. Cost share required by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation for feasibility studies.
5. Water studies to evaluate existing and future water supply and water distribution system needs and development of plans for existing and future improvements and water resource development for the following regions:

- Sweetwater to Tsaile-Wheatfields, Tuba City, Many Farms to Nazlini, Coyote Canyon to Lake Valley, and Shonto to Black Mesa.
6. Natural resources conservation plan for the Puerco Valley to manage, implement, monitor, and evaluate farmland, water, and related natural resources.

“The studies are needed so we can ask for different types of funding from different sources. Many entities, like the U.S. Department of Agriculture need studies to justify the need. Our studies will do that. Also, they will help Navajo Tribal Utility Authority and Indian Health Service to composed long term plans for water needs and usage,” President Shelly said.

As vice president of the Navajo Nation, President Shelly spearheaded lobbying of the New Mexico legislature to spend over \$30 million dollars on water development for Navajo communities.

Most of the \$8.6 million will fund water wells, waterlines and studies in the Arizona portion of the Navajo Nation. There is one project in New Mexico, which will funds a plan for a waterline from Coyote Canyon to Lake Valley and would complement the Navajo Gallup Water Supply project, a \$1 billion water project, which Congress approved as part of the Navajo San Juan River Water rights settlement in New Mexico.

“I want the Navajo Nation Council, the States and Washington to know that Navajos are serious about water development. It is a basic requirement to develop our Nation,” said President Shelly.

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